

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0136

S E C R E T OSLO 3156

EXDIS

DEPT ALSO PASS SECDEF ACTION IMMEDIATE

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS,BEXP,NO,FR,GW,NATO

SUBJECT: NORWEGIAN ACQUISITION OF ROLAND II

REF: OSLO 2930

1. MINISTER OF DEFENSE FOSTERVOLL INFORMED ME JULY 29 THAT HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH GERMAN MOD LEBER LAST WEEK ON THE "COMPROMISE SOLUTION" FOR NORWEGIAN ACQUISITION OF ROLAND II WERE SUCCESSFUL FROM NORWAY'S POINT OF VIEW. FOSTERVOLL LEAVES TODAY FOR PARIS AND WHAT HE HOPES WILL BE A FINAL ROUND OF MINISTERIAL TALKS WITH HIS FRENCH COUNTERPART.

2. FOSTERVOLL, IN SUMMARIZING THE NORWEGIAN POSITION, REITERATED TO ME HIS DEEP-SEATED RELUCTANCE TO PLACE NORWEGIAN SECURITY INTERESTS IN ANY RELATIONSHIP THAT INVOLVES DEPENDENCE UPON FRANCE. APART FROM FOSTERVOLL'S ADMITTED ANTI-FRENCH BIAS, THE MINISTER IMPLIED TO ME (AND, I PRESUME, TO LEBER) THAT HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT FRENCH INTERNAL POLITICAL STABILITY OVER THE LONGER TERM. NORWAY, THEREFORE, INSISTS THAT ANY ROLAND II SHORAD SYSTEM BE READILY AVAILABLE IN IDENTICAL FORM IN THE DEFENSE INVENTORIES OF OTHER ALLIES, ESPECIALLY THE U.S. THE NORWEGIAN MINISTER ALSO STATED THAT NORWAY HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO
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AGREE TO THE SO-CALLED COMPROMISE UNDER WHICH NORWAY

WOULD PURCHASE THE MISSILE ITSELF IN EUROPE AND ALL "GROUND EQUIPMENT" FROM THE U.S. ONE CONDITION FOR THIS, HOWEVER, WOULD BE THAT THE EUROPEAN MISSILE CONFORM IN EVERY DETAIL TO THE U.S. MANUFACTURED VERSION. (IT WAS OBVIOUS FROM OUR DISCUSSION THAT FOSTERVOLL WOULD STILL MUCH PREFER TO PURCHASE THE ROLAND II FROM THE U.S.) WHILE FOSTERVOLL SAID HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE COMPROMISE WAS U.S. IN ORIGIN, HE WANTED THE GERMANS TO PRESENT SUCH A PROPOSED SOLUTION DIRECTLY TO THE FRENCH. THIS OBJECTIVE WAS APPARENTLY ACHIEVED WHEN, ACCORDING TO THE MINISTER, LEBER CONFERRED WITH GISCARD D'ESTAING JULY 19 SPECIFICALLY ON THE MISSILE ISSUE.

3. I HAVE HEARD RUMORS OF PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION TO THE COMPROMISE SOLUTION ON THE GROUNDS OF NO INDUSTRIAL PARTICIPATION FOR NORWAY AND QUERIED THE MINISTER ON THIS POINT. FOSTERVOLL ACKNOWLEDGED SOME CRITICISM, ESPECIALLY FROM THE LEFT WING OF THE LABOR PARTY, BUT PREDICTED THAT PARLIAMENT WHICH HAS BEEN COPING WITH THE MISSILE ISSUE SINCE THE LATE 1960'S, WOULD WELCOME A FINAL SOLUTION AND ENDORSE A MODIFIED GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL DURING THIS FALL'S SESSION (THE FUNDING HAS ALREADY BEEN APPROPRIATED). FOSTERVOLL DID ADMIT ONE PROBLEM COULD ARISE IF THE LABOR PARTY FARED POORLY IN THE SEPTEMBER 14-15 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS-- NAMELY THAT A DEFEAT AT THE POLLS WOULD SPARK LABOR CRITICISM OF PETTY ISSUES AND FOCUS TROUBLESOME ATTENTION ON THE INDUSTRIAL PARTICIPATION ISSUE.

4. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO PARIS. BUCHANAN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECDEF.

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